

Message Text

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21

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 IO-13 MMO-01 PA-01 CPR-01 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1424

USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SOFIA 1383

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PROP, BU, US

SUBJECT: BULGARIAN BICENTENNIAL GESTURES TO THE US

REF: A) SOFIA 1344; B) SOFIA 0592; C) SOFIA 1325

1. AT 10:30 A.M. JULY 5, JUST BEFORE OUR BICENTENNIAL RECEPTION, FOREIGN MINISTER MLADENOV RECEIVED ME AT THIS REQUEST, APOLOGIZED FOR THE SHORT NOTICE, AND SAID HE WISHED TO INFORM USG OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS TAKEN OR PROPOSED BY THE GOB PURSUANT TO MY CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT ZHIVKOV JUNE 24 (REF A).

2. FIRST, THE BULGARIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD BE REPRESENTED AT AN UNUSUALLY HIGH LEVEL AT OUR RECEPTION, TO PAY TRIBUTE TO OUR BICENTENNIAL: A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY POLITBURO, THE HEAD OF THE AGRARIAN UNION, A FIRST VICE PRESIDENT OF THE STATE COUNCIL, ONE VICE PREMIER, FOUR MINISTERS AND ASSORTED VICE MINISTERS. (THEY ALL CAME AS PREDICTED.)

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3. SECOND, HE HAD CONVOKED ME ALSO TO CONVEY SPECIAL

GREETINGS FROM THE BULGARIAN GOVERNMENT TO THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT, GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE, WISHING SUCCESS, HAPPINESS ETC. ETC. I ASKED IF THIS WAS THE MESSAGE THAT ACCORDING TO THE PRESS HAD ALREADY BEEN CONVEYED TO WASHINGTON JULY 4. MLADENOV BEAMED AND SAID THAT WAS JUST IT, HE WAS CONVEYING AN ADDITIONAL "MORE PERSONAL" GREETING ALSO ON BEHALF OF PRESIDENT ZHIVKOV.

4. FINALLY, HE SAID, THE GOB WISHED TO MAKE WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS A "NICE" SUGGESTION, IN RESPONSE TO A POINT I HAD MADE TO ZHIVKOV (ON MISREPRESENTATIONS ABOUT THE US IN THE MEDIA, ESPECIALLY TV) BOTH BEFORE MY DEPARTURE ON HOME LEAVE AND CONSULTATION IN MARCH (REF B) AND AFTER MY RETURN FROM THOSE CONSULTATIONS LAST MONTH (REF A): THEY WOULD GIVE ME FIVE TO TEN MINUTES OF PRIME TIME ON BULGARIAN TELEVISION THAT VERY EVENING TO ADDRESS THE BULGARIAN PEOPLE ON THE OCCASION OF OUR BICENTENNIAL. THE SPOT BEING RESERVED WAS ONE "WHICH SO FAR WE HAVE GIVEN ONLY THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR," RIGHT AFTER THE EVENING NEWS BROADCAST. BTV WAS STANDING BY TO COOPERATE IN ALL THE ARRANGEMENTS INCLUDING WRITING AND/OR TRANSLATING THE SCRIPT.

5. I SAID THE OFFER WAS VERY MUCH APPRECIATED, AND WONDERED IF MLADENOV MINDED IF I MADE A COUNTER-SUGGESTION. IT DID NOT SEEM TO ME THAT THE BULGARIAN TV AUDIENCE WOULD ENJOY VERY MUCH SEEING THE FACE OF THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR FOR TEN MINUTES, THEY MIGHT ENJOY MORE SEEING SOME SCENES AND VIEWS OF THE UNITED STATES DURING SUCH A PERIOD. WE COULD PROVIDE FOOTAGE, AND I WOULD BE GLAD TO INTRODUCE SUCH A BICENTENNIAL BROADCAST WITH A BRIEF STATEMENT. IF MLADENOV AGREED, WE COULD COOPERATE WITH BTV IN PUTTING ON SUCH A BROADCAST DURING PRIME TIME A LITTLE LATER. MLADENOV AGREED.

6. COMMENT: THIS IS A QUICK RESPONSE TO A COMPLAINT THAT I HAD LAST MADE ON MY OWN INITIATIVE TO ZHIVKOV WHEN, IN EFFECT, MY INSTRUCTIONS HAD COVERED ONLY POSITIVE ITEMS FOR REVIEW WITH HIM. (THERE MIGHT ALSO BE

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A CONNECTION WITH MY CONVERSATION WITH MLADENOV ABOUT A POINT REGARDING CSCE IMPLEMENTATION, CF. PARAS 6 AND 7, REF C.) WE SHOULD GRASP THIS OPPORTUNITY QUICKLY. EMBASSY WILL MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS SEPARATELY REGARDING PROGRAM CONTENT. NEEDLESS TO SAY, WHAT IS NEEDED HERE IS A PROGRAM NOT ABOUT OUR BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS BUT ABOUT CONTEMPORARY AMERICA, ON THE OCCASION OF OUR BICENTENNIAL. AT OUR RECEPTION LATER YESTERDAY,

ZHIVKOV'S SON-IN-LAW IVAN SLAVKOV, WHO IS VICE CHAIRMAN
OF THE COMMITTEE FOR RADIO AND TELEVISION, INDICATED
HE HAD RECEIVED ORDERS TO COOPERATE WITH US IN EVERY
WAY ON THE BROADCAST.
HERZ

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